

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A system for routing a plurality of end-users through an access network to a plurality of service providers based on a request for a particular service of a plurality of services, comprising:

a service provider selection mechanism configured to relate a particular service provider to a particular end-user for providing the particular service to the particular end-user; and

a path determination mechanism configured to determine a network path via the access network through which to connect ~~route~~ the particular end-user ~~through the access network~~ to the particular service provider when the particular end-user requests the particular service.

Claim 2 (Original): The system of Claim 1, wherein the service provider selection mechanism comprises a database.

Claim 3 (Original): The system of Claim 2, wherein the database comprises a distributed database.

Claim 4 (Original): The system of Claim 2, wherein the database is populated with a plurality of end-user service entries, each end-user service entry including

an end-user identification indicator corresponding to a unique one of the plurality of end-users,

a selected service indicator corresponding to a selected one of the plurality of services, and

a selected service provider indicator corresponding to a selected one of the plurality of service providers selected to provide the selected one of the plurality of services to the unique one of the plurality of end-users.

Claim 5 (Original): The system of Claim 4, wherein the end-user identification indicator comprises at least one of a number, an Internet protocol address, a media access control address, a telephone number, a port number, a local area network tag, a virtual local area network tag, a multi-protocol label switching label, a label-switched path label, a label, a tag, a serial number, and a social security number.

Claim 6 (Original): The system of Claim 4, wherein:
the service provider selection mechanism is further configured such that at least one of an operator of the access network, an authorized agency, a governing entity, a regulatory entity, one of the plurality of end-users, one of the plurality of service providers, and a third party can populate the end-user identification indicator for the particular end-user in the database.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The system of Claim 1, wherein:
the request is made over the access network providing a communication path between the particular end-user and a data center,
the path determination mechanism is further configured to determine a network path via the access network through which to connect ~~route~~ the particular end-user ~~through the access network~~ to the particular service provider, and

the particular service provider provides the particular end-user with access to a service network providing the particular service.

Claim 8 (Original): The system of Claim 7, wherein the service network comprises at least one of an Internet protocol network, the Internet, a data network, a video network, and a voice network.

Claim 9 (Original): The system of Claim 1, wherein the access network comprises an open access network.

Claim 10 (Original): The system of Claim 1, wherein the access network comprises at least one of a hybrid fiber optic/coaxial network, a digital subscriber line, a dialup connection, a fiber optic connection, a coaxial connection, a twisted pair connection, a cat5 connection, a cat5e connection, and a cat6 connection.

Claim 11 (Original): The system of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of service providers comprise at least one of an Internet service provider, a telephone company, a cable television company, a video content provider, a voice-over-Internet protocol provider, and a data services provider.

Claim 12 (Original): The system of Claim 1, further comprising:
a data center configured to provide connectivity between the access network and a plurality of service networks, wherein
the plurality of end-users access the data center via the access network, and

the data center is configured to route end-users to the plurality of service networks via the plurality of service providers.

Claim 13 (Original): The system of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of services comprise at least one of data services, Internet access, voice services, telephone services, teleconferencing services, long distance telephone service, local telephone service, video services, video conferencing services, video on demand services, and cable television services.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The system of Claim 1, wherein the path determination mechanism is further configured to determine a network path via the access network through which to connect ~~route~~ the particular end-user to the particular service provider by selecting at least one of a forwarding path, a channel, and a tunnel.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): The system of Claim 1, wherein the path determination mechanism is further configured to determine a network path via the access network through which to connect ~~route~~ the particular end-user to the particular service provider using at least one of source address routing, multi-protocol label switching, asynchronous transfer mode, private virtual circuits, switched virtual circuits, virtual local area networks, layer two tunneling protocol tunnels, Internet protocol secure tunnels, point-to-point tunneling protocol tunnels, and point-to-point protocol over ethernet.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The system of Claim 1, wherein:
the path determination mechanism is further configured to determine a network path via the access network through which to connect ~~route~~ the particular end-user to an alternate

service provider of the plurality of service providers when a path is not available from the particular end-user to the particular service provider, and

the service provider selection mechanism is further configured to relate the alternate service provider to the particular end-user for alternately providing the particular service to the particular end-user.

Claim 17 (Original): The system of Claim 4, wherein each end-user service entry further includes

an alternate service provider indicator corresponding to another one of the plurality of service providers for alternately providing the selected one of the plurality of services to the unique one of the plurality of end-users.

Claim 18 (Original): The system of Claim 17, wherein:

the service provider selection mechanism is further configured to populate the alternate service provider indicator by at least one of

assigning a default service provider of the plurality of service providers for providing the selected one of the plurality of services,

randomly assigning a random service provider of the plurality of service providers for providing the selected one of the plurality of services based on a random selection, and

assigning a user-specified service provider of the plurality of service providers for providing the selected one of the plurality of services based on a user input.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The system of Claim 1, wherein:

the path determination mechanism is further configured such that at least one of an operator of the access network, an authorized agency, a governing entity, a regulatory entity, and a third party can cause the particular end-user to be connected ~~routed~~ to an available one of the plurality of service providers for providing the particular service when it is determined that an acceptable path between the particular end-user and the particular service provider cannot not established.

Claim 20 (Original): A system for routing an end-user of a plurality of end-users to a first service provider of a plurality of service providers for providing a first service over an open access network and to a second service provider of the plurality of service providers for providing a second service over the open access network, comprising:

a digital repository populated with a plurality of end-user service entries, each end-user service entry including

an end-user identification indicator corresponding to a unique one of the plurality of end-users,

a selected service indicator corresponding to a selected one of the first service and the second service, and

a selected service provider indicator corresponding to a selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider selected to provide the selected one of the first service and the second service to the unique one of the plurality of end-users;

a processor; and

a computer readable medium encoded with processor readable instructions that when executed by the processor implement

a service provider selection mechanism configured to populate the digital repository with an end-user service entry,

a service request mechanism configured to accept a request from the end-user for a requested one of the first service and the second service,

a path determination mechanism configured to query the digital repository for a retrieved end-user service entry based on the end-user and the requested one of the first service and the second service and to provide a network path from the end-user to a selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider, the selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider being determined based on information stored in the retrieved end-user service entry.

Claim 21 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein

the request is made over an access network providing a communication path between the end-user and a data center,

the network path comprises a path from the end-user through the access network to the selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider, and

the selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider provides access to a service network providing the requested one of the first service and the second service.

Claim 22 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein the open access network comprises at least one of a hybrid fiber optic/coaxial network, a digital subscriber line, a dialup connection, a fiber optic connection, a coaxial connection, a twisted pair connection, a cat5 connection, a cat5e connection, and a cat6 connection.

Claim 23 (Original): The system of Claim 21, wherein the service network comprises at least one of an Internet protocol network, the Internet, a data network, a video network, and a voice network.

Claim 24 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein at least one of the first service provider and the second service provider comprise at least one of an Internet service provider, a telephone company, a cable television company, a video content provider, a voice-over-Internet protocol provider, and a data services provider.

Claim 25 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein at least one of the first service and the second service comprises at least one of data services, Internet access, voice services, telephone services, teleconferencing services, long distance telephone service, local telephone service, video services, video conferencing services, video on demand services, and cable television services.

Claim 26 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein the end-user identification indicator comprises at least one of a number, an Internet protocol address, a media access control address, a telephone number, a port number, a local area network tag, a virtual local area network tag, a multi-protocol label switch label, a label-switched path label, a label, a tag, a serial number, and a social security number.

Claim 27 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein the path determination mechanism is further configured to route the end-user to the selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider by selecting at least one of a forwarding path, a channel, and a tunnel.

Claim 28 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein:

the path determination mechanism is further configured to route the end-user to the selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider using at least one of source address routing, multi-protocol label switching, asynchronous transfer mode, private virtual circuits, switched virtual circuits, virtual local area networks, layer two tunneling protocol tunnels, Internet protocol secure tunnels, point-to-point tunneling protocol tunnels, and point-to-point protocol over ethernet.

Claim 29 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein:

each end-user service entry further includes

an alternate service provider indicator corresponding to an alternate one of the first service provider and the second service provider selected to alternately provide the requested one of the first service and the second service to the end-user, and

the path determination mechanism is further configured to route the end-user to the alternate one of the first service provider and the second service provider to provide the requested one of the first service and the second service when a path is not available from the end-user to the selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider.

Claim 30 (Original): The system of Claim 29, wherein:

the service provider selection mechanism is further configured to populate the alternate service provider indicator by at least one of

assigning a default service provider of the plurality of service providers for providing the requested one of the first service and the second service,

randomly assigning a random service provider of the plurality of service providers for providing the requested one of the first service and the second service based on a random selection, and

assigning a user-specified service provider of the plurality of service providers for providing the requested one of the first service and the second service based on a user input.

Claim 31 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein:
the digital repository comprises a database.

Claim 32 (Original): The system of Claim 31, wherein:
the database comprises a distributed database.

Claim 33 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein:
the service provider selection mechanism is further configured such that at least one of an operator of the access network, an authorized agency, a governing entity, a regulatory entity, one of the plurality of end-users, one of the plurality of service providers, and a third party can populate the end-user identification indicator for the end-user in the database.

Claim 34 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein:
the path determination mechanism is further configured to route the end-user to the selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider using at least one of source address routing, multi-protocol label switching, asynchronous transfer mode, private virtual circuits, switched virtual circuits, and virtual local area networks.

Claim 35 (Original): The system of Claim 20, wherein:

the path determination mechanism is further configured to route the end-user to an alternate one of the first service provider and the second service provider to provide the requested one of the first service and the second service when a path is not available from the end-user to the selected one of the first service provider and the second service provider, and

the alternate one of the first service provider and the second service provider comprises one of a default and a randomly selected service provider.

Claims 36-60 (Canceled)

Claim 61 (Currently Amended): A system for providing a wholesale provisioning service, comprising:

a service provider selection mechanism configured to relate a particular service provider of a plurality of service providers to a particular end-user of a plurality of end-users for providing a particular service of a plurality of services to the particular end-user;

a service request mechanism configured to receive a request for the particular service from the particular end-user; and

a path determination mechanism configured to determine a network path through which to route the particular end-user to the particular service provider based on the request.